Luck of the Devil

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Luck of the Devil

by SingingInTheRaiin

Summary

Will's still not entirely sure where he stands with Hannibal- or even where he should be standing with Hannibal. He doesn't exactly have time to figure out, though, considering the fact that he has to deal with someone who's mauling people like animals, while also trying to keep Jack appeased.

Notes

Alright, I gave in and changed the title of chapter two so that all of them have the word ‘devil’ xD

“I’m glad to have you on my side, Will,” Jack confessed in a quiet voice. “I don’t think that there’s any bait out there that will be able to draw Lecter in quite as well as you.”

Will reached up to tug awkwardly at the knit cap he was wearing. “Why me, though?”

Jack tilted his head. “Surely being who you are has clued you in to the fact that Lecter fancies you, Will. But it isn’t healthy. I’m not sure if that man is even capable of feeling love. But I do believe that he wants to own you. If you tell him that you’re his man, then he’s going to believe you. And we’ll get him, Will, together. The Chesapeake Ripper will finally be locked away for good. You just need to get him to confess, and then everything will be over.”

Will looked over at where Hannibal was busy cooking as he thought about his most recent conversation with Jack. “Hannibal, have you ever killed and cooked a human before?”

Hannibal glanced over his shoulder looking bemused. “You know that I have, darling.” He turned back to the skillet in front of him- because god forbid he ever overcook a garnish by a few seconds- but it was obvious that he wanted to know what the point was in asking him such a question.

Will sighed. Well, he’d gotten a direct confession, but he got the feeling that everything was far from over. “I’m not sure how I want things to end with Jack. Of course I want him to be able to walk away from all of this in one piece, but I just don’t know how to make him drop it. Catching the Ripper is his Moby Dick, and he’s never going to stop until he’s succeeded, or he’s dead.”

“One of those two options could be easily arranged,” Hannibal purred.

“No.” Will responded quickly, so that Hannibal wouldn’t start getting any ideas, but it was obvious from his tone that the sentiment was half-hearted at best.

That’s when Hannibal turned the stove off, and then walked over to where Will was seated at the island. “Does Jack Crawford really bother you so much? Or is there something else that is troubling you? You know that you can tell me anything.”

Will shrugged one shoulder. “Probably just generic worry. I just don’t want to see anyone else get hurt, Hannibal.”

Hannibal laughed as he reached out to gently brush some of Will’s unruly curls behind his ear. “I am certain that it is already far too late for that. Or are you already forgetting about our first date?”

Will’s face went slightly pink, and he pulled away from Hannibal’s touch. Even just that small bit of contact felt too good for him to be able to think properly. “You know what I mean. Innocent people. Jack doesn’t deserve to get hurt just because he wants to save people.”

“But Will, with our current deal, the only people Jack can save from me are vile criminals to begin with. Surely he can’t be innocent himself if he is willing to work so hard to defend

some monsters from the scarier monster."

Will hopped down to his feet. "It doesn't matter who you're victims are; the point is that Jack is ready and willing to risk everything to protect people. It's an admiral goal, and even though he obviously cannot save everyone, who am I to stop him from saving the ones that he can?"

Hannibal. "Then don't stop him."

"If I don't, then he's going to come after you with everything he's got, and he's going to expect me to be helping him the whole way."

"Which, of course, you will not be doing," Hannibal reminded him. "It would be such a shame to break our contract after we've gone through so much trouble to get to know each other the old fashioned way."

Will crossed his arms over his chest. "You know, for someone who claims to really care about me, you are awfully addicted to abiding by a contract. What's wrong with just letting a relationship happen naturally?"

The amused glint in Hannibal's eyes was almost too much. "Awfully hypocritical, Will. You wish for me to remain bound by my end of the contract as much as I wish for the reverse. Though if you're really okay with dropping all pretenses of a deal, then I suppose you wouldn't mind if I were to go out and slaughter the first person I come across?"

Alright, so admittedly Hannibal had a point. Will didn't have to like it, but it was true. He'd much prefer to have Hannibal obey their deal without himself being held to the same constraints. It was hypocritical of him, and he didn't even really have much of a defense in his favor. "I have to go now."

"Running away, Will?" Though the look of amusement was still there, there was also a sudden hardness to Hannibal's voice. It sent a chill down Will's spine to think that Hannibal was perhaps trying to threaten him into sticking around.

He just grabbed his jacket from where it had been hanging off the back of the chair, and began pulling it on. "My dogs need me."

Hannibal reached out to gently grab Will's arm that hadn't yet made it into one of his jacket sleeves. "I'm sure they'd survive a single night without you."

Will laughed. "You're even needier than my dogs, Hannibal. What does that say about you?" In a situation where he had the literal devil on his hands, with who knows what kind of power, it was always nice to find whatever points of leverage that he could. And the fact that Hannibal really did seem to be so enamored with him was definitely to Will's advantage, though he'd yet to figure out how to really use that. "I'm leaving now. I'll see you on Thursday, I promise."

Hannibal narrowed his eyes. "It is only Monday today."

“I’m well aware.” Will gave Hannibal a very quick kiss, then pulled his arm free and hurried away before the other man could catch him again. His heart was pounding rather loudly as he slid into his car and started the engine. There was just something about being with Hannibal was so exhilarating, and even if this wasn’t the way he would have ever imagined his life going, he couldn’t help feeling content.

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There seemed to be an endless amount of dead bodies in the world, and Will wouldn’t mind so much if it weren’t for the fact that for some reason Jack always felt the need to call him out of bed at all hours of the night and early morning. It meant he was usually showing up to crime scenes looking like little more than a zombie, much to Beverly’s amusement. “I’m sure no one would have bothered you much if you’d decided to stop for a quick cup of coffee on your way. It’s not like these guys are going anywhere anytime soon.”

Will looked at the torn apart bodies. “Looks like some kind of animal attack. Why are we here?”

Price pointed to the wide open door of the truck, which had no damage done to it. “Ever seen a wild animal open a door so politely? Not even the slightest scratch on the window.”

“We’re thinking that it must have been someone who trained a big animal to kill on command for them,” Zeller added.

Will sighed, and jammed his hands further into his pockets, trying to stay at least a little bit warm. “Too bad murderers don’t have the good sense to only kill people when it’s warm out.”

Beverly nodded. “Yeah, that would make things much easier. Killers going into hibernation for the winter. Though that might mean that they have to kill a lot of people before tucking themselves away, so I’m not sure whether that would be better or worse.”

“Enough small talk!” Jack snapped at them. “This is hardly the time or place for such an inappropriate conversation.” Then he focused on Will. “I’ll make sure the area is cleared so that you have a few minutes to do your thing.”

Will closed his eyes and let the pendulum swing before focusing back on the scene in front of him, watching as everything moved in reverse until it got to the beginning of where he needed to see the story from. He felt like it had been too long since he’d worked a case and done things that had absolutely nothing to do with Hannibal. It was a nice change of pace.

Later, when he was back at the BSU with Jack and the geek squad to fill out crime scene reports and toss ideas around, Will felt strangely comfortable. He may be a lot of things, but at least he didn’t see himself as something he wasn’t, the way that this killer did.

Just when Will was packing up to head back home, Jack called him into his office, and told him to shut the door behind him. Will sat down, and looked curiously across the desk at Jack. “Is there something else you needed?”

Jack slammed shut the file folder that had been open in front of him. “What I need is to not have new murderers constantly popping up and getting in the way of putting the Ripper behind bars, where he belongs. But since I can’t get that, the next best thing is having you catch this guy as quickly as possible. Lecter needs to be the priority here, Will, do you understand that? So I need you stop this crazy animal guy so that we can focus on Lecter again.”

Will nodded. “I’m on it, Jack.” Then he stood back up. “I’ll talk to you again tomorrow.”

Throughout the long drive home, Will couldn’t help thinking about everything he’d picked up on at the crime scene. He’d heard of furries before, but whoever this killer was, he was taking things to a whole new unpleasant level.

As he pulled into his driveway, Will’s headlights bounced off of Hannibal’s Bentley, and Will took in a deep breath just to heave out a heavy sigh. He should have known that Hannibal would be too impatient to wait a couple of days. It reminded him of the many other times that Hannibal had showed up unannounced in the middle of the night, usually to cook for Will. Though with the way his stomach was growling, Will knew that he wouldn’t turn down any food if it was offered to him, even if he hadn’t watched Hannibal throughout the entire cooking process.

He headed straight to the kitchen, since he knew that that was where he would find Hannibal, and then leaned his hip against the doorframe, crossing his arms over his chest. “I could have you arrested for breaking and entering,” he pointed out.

“I’m sure that won’t be necessary. Or you should at least wait to arrest me until after you’ve gotten the chance to eat.”

Will arched one eyebrow. “Are you saying that you want me to put you in handcuffs? Don’t think that I won’t.”

Hannibal laughed. “It would hardly be the most adventurous I’ve ever gotten. But that is a conversation for another time. For now, sit, and eat.”

Will found himself obeying, if only because the food did smell good and he hadn’t gotten the chance to gulp down more than a couple of snacks from the vending machine. He waited for Hannibal to put a plate down in front of him, and then rudely began eating before Hannibal had seated himself. “Thanks,” he mumbled out between mouthfuls.

It was a sure fact that such behaviors from anyone else would result in death without Will’s continued deal. And Will found himself enjoying pushing the limits, to see when Hannibal would finally be fed up with him. Based on how fondly he was looking at Will, it didn’t seem like that was going to happen anytime soon. “Once you are officially my consort, I will make sure that you always take proper care of yourself,” Hannibal said in a quiet, yet dangerous, tone. Will didn’t really know what to say to that, and after another minute, Hannibal politely inquired, “Long day?”

Will sighed, and leaned back in his seat, swallowing the rest of his current mouthful before answering. “You could say that.”

“Why don’t you tell me about it?”

Something about this scene felt sickeningly domestic, but Will couldn’t find any good reason to deny Hannibal, so he just started talking. “At first they thought that someone trained a large animal to rip people apart, but I’m pretty sure that this guy was the only one there. He’s very primitive, like-”

“He sees himself as an animal?” Hannibal finished thoughtfully. “I once treated a patient with a similar line of unusual thinking.”

Will rolled his eyes. “Of course you did. You know, I’m really starting to think that you’ve given out far more disorders than you’ve ever healed.” But it was as good a lead as any, and Hannibal had cooked for him. “What was this patient’s name?”

Hannibal smiled, clearly pleased to be useful to Will. “His name is Randall Tier. He had a rather severe identity disorder. I treated him when he was merely a teenager. I can only imagine how much he and his identity have grown since then. It is a rather rare condition. I would be surprised for there to be another case of it within the same general area.”

“Then I guess I should be thanking you for dinner and the information. Though you did break into my house and go against the boundaries that I clearly laid out for us, so I’d say that we break even here.”

Hannibal laughed. “If that’s what would make you happy to believe.” He stood up and grabbed both empty plates to carry them over to the sink, which definitely looked cleaner than it had when Will set out this morning. But he wasn’t going to mention the free cleaning service if Hannibal wasn’t going to. “I did not just come here to feed you, though I will admit that I take great pleasure in seeing you consume my work. I also came to provide you with a gift.”

Will furrowed his eyebrows, but didn’t make any move to get out of his seat. “It’s not my birthday, or any other gift-giving holiday that I can think of. If this is so that I’ll feel indebted to you…”

The sound of the sink was noisy enough to drown out conversation for a minute, and then Hannibal turned to face Will again, leaning back against the counter. “It is nothing of the sort. Think of it as a courting gift. Call it proof of my intentions towards you, if you will.” He reached into the pocket of his coat, which had been slung over one of the empty chairs, and pulled out a small box. He snapped it open, revealing a little ring.

There’s no way that giving Will a ring didn’t mean something like a proposal, and Will had no idea of whether he should even accept it or not. It’s not like he could just go around wearing a wedding ring without inviting lots of questions his way, and that’s if he even wanted to wear it. It would be wearing a mark of Hannibal’s, like a sign that he belonged to the other man.

But he couldn’t deny that he was curious. Will gently pulled the ring free from its velvet confines, and turned it over in his hand as he studied it. It looked like a small loop made of vines and ribbons. It was so intricate and well made that if it weren’t for the fact that the

entire thing was a shiny silver color, Will might think that it was actually made of real vines. There was an engraving on the inside, and Will had to squint his eyes to make out the small, fancy script. ‘For my heart and all that it is encased in’ was what it said.

There was a strange look on Hannibal’s face as he watched Will investigate the ring. “That belonged to my sister.”

Will slowly looked up at Hannibal. “Your sister? I didn’t know you had one.”

“Not as Hannibal Lecter,” he said softly. “But truly of my flesh and blood. I may take my job seriously, but that does not mean I never had a family of my own. I was never human, but I was once less than I am now. Well, perhaps not less. But different. That was my darling Mischa’s wedding ring.”

It didn’t escape Will’s attention that the ring looked as though it was the perfect size to fit on his own fingers, but he thought it might be insensitive to ask if Mischa had had large hands. “Why do you have her wedding ring?” he asked instead. It seemed like a more appropriate question.

Now Will could see that the look on Hannibal’s face was definitely one of nostalgia. Hannibal reached out to gently take Will’s hand between both of his, keeping the ring pressed up against Will’s palm. “Her entire family was destroyed in punishment for a crime that I had committed. I did not gain my current position by making friends, but I had not thought that my enemies would take such drastic measures against me. It has been a very long time since I have found anything worth taking a risk for. Please, wear the ring Will. It would mean more to me than I can ever explain to you.”

Guilt-tripping was a classical Hannibal move to get what he wanted. But in this case, Will couldn’t help thinking that maybe the devil was actually telling him the truth. And it was a beautiful ring. “How would I explain it?” he asked softly.

“You won’t have to worry about that. Once you put it on, you and I will be the only ones able to see it.” If Hannibal was telling the truth, then that meant that this wasn’t just a case of marking territory.

Will sighed, and then slipped the ring onto his finger before he could overthink it. “Thank you for this gift, but I still haven’t agreed to be your consort.” He needed to make sure that that was still clear enough for Hannibal to understand.

And it seemed like he did, because he just raised Will’s hand to brush a kiss against his knuckles, and then settled back into his own seat. “Of course.”

They both sat there in silence for a minute before Will remembered that he had an actual job to do. “Right, well, I should probably call Jack with your lead.”

“Do be careful, Will. You may have told Jack that you are on his side, but he is an inconveniently clever man at times.”

“I can take care of myself,” Will told him pointedly. Then he stood and headed upstairs to his room, hoping for at least a little bit of privacy. He called Jack’s cellphone, but apparently it was too late for the man to answer, which meant that Will would just have to leave a message for him. “Jack, I know you’re not going to be fond of the source, but I have a name for a suspect. Randall Tier was a patient of Hannibal’s a few years back, and apparently he thought that he was actually an animal. At least look into it and let me know what you find. I’ll continue to keep an eye on Hannibal.” Then he hung up, and flopped backwards onto his bed, staring up at the ceiling. He raised his arm straight up, and tilted his hand back so that he could look at the ring. Why had he automatically put it on his ring finger? He could have easily chosen any of the others, but he put it on that one. There’s no way that Hannibal wouldn’t think that that was an important detail. Will sighed. Too bad no one had ever made a guidebook for being courted by the devil so that he’d at least have some idea of what he was even doing.

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Jack gave Will a long look before finally speaking. “Tier works at a museum. We will go and talk to him. But first, you will tell me what you were doing with Hannibal Lecter at one in the morning. And don’t try to give me any bullshit about having just suddenly remembered what he said at that time. I want the truth, Will. Now.”

Will’s mind immediately began racing through the possibilities. Obviously he couldn’t actually give Jack the truth. But maybe there was some way to spin this into his favor. “You’re the one who said that he fancies me, and that if he thinks he has me, we’ll be able to trip him up.”

Jack stared at him for a long few seconds before responding. “Are you saying that you’re having sex with him?” Jack asked in his usual blunt way. “Can you even begin to understand what a mess it will be to explain that to IA? They’re already all over my ass because of everything with Miriam Lass, and how certain she was that Frederick Chilton was the Ripper.”

Will shrugged. “I just thought it was the easiest way to convince him that I’m really on his side.”

Jack sighed. “Well shit, Will.” He reached up to scrub at his face for a moment before dropping his hand down onto his lap. “Well, I can assure you that I do not need that kind of convincing. Just be careful, Will. Lecter is dangerous, and getting that intimate with a person makes both of you vulnerable, not just him.” Then he stood up. “Alright, let’s get to the museum. It’s been a while since I’ve seen any good dinosaurs.”

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Both Jack and Will were nearly certain that Tier was the killer, but they didn’t have the right proof just yet. So Will returned home in defeat, and hung up his jacket by the door. He fed and watered the dogs, and then propped open the kitchen door so that they could run around outside in the snow for a few minutes. He wondered if his pack would prefer to live somewhere that was warm and sunny all the time.

Will decided to be productive, and finish what Hannibal had started when it came to the daunting task of cleaning his kitchen. He really did need to start keeping his place in a better condition, but it just seemed like so much unnecessary work most of the time, since he was already so busy with everything else that happened in his life.

As he scrubbed at the counter, he heard a pained yelp from outside. Will furrowed his eyebrows, and pushed the door open. “Hey, guys, what’s going on? There were various barks and yips, and then his pack stampeded back into the house, bringing mud and slushy snow in with them. Will did a quick head count, and found that he was one dog short.

Will quickly tugged on his boots, and then grabbed his shotgun and ran outside. He didn’t really expect to encounter anything too bad out there, but he also made a living catching some of the sickest and most twisted people out there, so he was under no illusions that he lived in a safe world.

After searching for a few minutes, Will managed to find Buster, who had large gash in one of his hind legs and was whimpering in pain. Will knelt down and dropped his gun to get a better look at the poor dog, trying to provide soothing petting motions to calm Buster down. Then abruptly looked up abruptly when he heard the crunching of snow that only happened when people stepped on it. He glanced at Buster’s injury again. Had Tier come here to kill him? But why?

Not that it mattered at the moment. He scooped up Buster in one arm, grabbed the shotgun, and then started running back to the house. If he was being hunted, then he’d prefer for it to be on his own terms, as weird as that was to think about.

Inside, Will hustled all the dogs into the downstairs bathroom, even though he knew that there wasn’t really enough space for all of them. He’d rather they be squished and uncomfortable than injured or dead. Buster’s wound didn’t look bad enough that he’d bleed out from it, but Will still hoped he’d be able to patch it up as soon as possible.

He went around and turned off every downstairs light that was on, not wanting to give away his position to Tier with a brightly illuminated spotlight on himself. He held the shotgun, waiting. His heart was pounding like crazy, but his hands were surprisingly steady. He’d killed Garret Jacob Hobbs. He’d tortured Sam until the man released Will from his spell. He could take on Randall Tier now, and he’d worry about why this was happening once it was over.

Will had no idea what to expect, but he tried not to be too startled when Tier crashed right through one of the windows, sending glass shards and little splinters of wood flying everywhere. Will brought one arm up to protect his face from the flying glass, and then immediately pointed his gun at the figure on the floor.

Admittedly, Tier’s getup was impressive, considering that he had to have made it entirely himself. But it wouldn’t protect him from a bullet to the head. No one would blame Will for killing the man after he’d just broken in so much more violently than Hannibal ever had. But that wouldn’t really be fair, would it? Tier was just an animal. Using a gun on him would be too cruel, would give him no chance to succeed.

The two men stared at each other intensely, and then Will tossed the shotgun aside, shifting into a fighting stance. He didn't wait for Tier to come to him, just charged forward to punch the man in the stomach. Tier reacted quickly, and soon, the two of them were fighting for their lives, shoving each other around the room, grappling around on the floor, each getting in as many hits as they could to the other.

Will ducked aside to avoid a swipe that would have taken his head off, and he could feel the wind whistle past the scar on his neck that had been a gift from Tobias Budge. The claw landed on his shoulder instead, digging in deep enough to tear a chunk of skin off as Will rolled away.

It was probably only thanks to the adrenaline pumping through him that he didn't pass out from the pain. But Will knew that he had to win this fight. He reached over and grabbed at the base of the giant claws, and tugged until he managed to pull it off of Tier's hand, and then threw it aside, not caring where it landed.

Tier snarled viciously, and he really did sound like an animal in that moment. Then the two of them were throwing fists at each other, blood spraying everywhere, though Will had no idea which of them it was coming from. Then Will finally managed to slam Tier's head against the wall, and in the moment that Tier was dazed, Will leapt onto his back and toppled him to the floor, slamming his head down there several times.

Tier continued to struggle, but his movements were sluggish and weak, clear signs of exhaustion and concussion. Will punched at Tier's mask until it shattered, and then he tugged it off of the fallen man. Tier seemed to realize that he was defeated, and he accepted the defeat by tilting his head to the side, offering up his neck. Will's hands were covered in blood, and it was difficult to move his fingers because they felt so stiff, but he managed to wrap his hands around Tier's neck, and he squeezed until long after Tier lost consciousness. He kept squeezing tighter, until he was sure that Tier was dead, and then he slumped forward.

It took a lot of effort to pry his hands away from Tier's mangled neck, and then from there to stagger to his feet. His whole body hurt, and his living room was a complete mess. For a moment, Will had no idea what he was supposed to do. Call Jack? Call the police? It wouldn't be a lie to claim self defense, though he'd probably be questioned about why he kept going even after Tier was incapacitated.

Then Will realized what he was supposed to do now. He had defeated Tier. He had been victorious, and he found that there was only one person he wanted to share that feeling of celebration with. Will left some food and water in the bathroom, but didn't let the dogs out, not wanting them to get hurt on all the mess out there. He did take Buster, though, to carefully stitch up his leg, and then he went upstairs and put Buster in the bathroom there so that he wouldn't be trampled during his recovery.

Then Will went back downstairs and pulled on his coat with minor difficulties. He grunted from the exertion of grabbing Tier's arms and dragging him outside, and then shoving him into the trunk of his car. So maybe it wasn't the smartest move, since there was sure to be lots of DNA evidence left behind. But for now, Will couldn't find it within himself to care about things like that.

He made the long drive back to Baltimore, feeling more sore and pained as he went and the adrenaline wore away. He got to Hannibal's house, and saw that the familiar car was not in the driveway, which meant that Will had to drag Tier in all by himself. He had a key, thanks to Hannibal's insistence, so he didn't have to worry about trying to find the best way to break in.

Will pulled Tier's body behind him through the house, and then used the last of his energy to lift it onto Hannibal's dining room table. It seemed like a fitting sight for Hannibal to return home to, even though Will knew that Hannibal wouldn't have sent a killer after him. Maybe in some other life he might've, but in this life he wanted Will to marry him.

Completely exhausted, Will sank down into one of the chairs and leaned back, not even bothering to turn on the lights. He felt like he could sleep for the next thousand years, and his shoulder was throbbing, and he felt like he'd just been through the ringer. He closed his eyes, swearing to himself that it would just be for a minute, and then ended up almost dozing off, until the dining room lights were flipped on.

Hannibal was standing in the doorway to the room, taking in the scene with wide eyes. It was nice to know that Will still had the ability to surprise the man, despite everything. "He came to my house," Will croaked out through a throat that felt raw. "I won. Figured that you could…"

Hannibal's expression slowly shifted into one of delight. "Did you bring him as a gift, Will? A present for me to cook up after you proved your strength by besting him in battle?"

Will started to shrug, but then sharply inhaled when the movement jarred his shoulder too much. "Suppose so," Will mumbled.

Hannibal walked over and gently helped Will out of the chair. "Come on, let's get you cleaned up. And then I will show you my full appreciation for this gift."

"Why was he at my house?"

Hannibal frowned. "That I do not know. But if I find that he was sent your way intentionally, the person responsible will regret their actions. Though I cannot deny that you look exquisite in this moment, Will."

Will sighed. "Thanks." He let himself be helped to the bathroom, where Hannibal very gently scrubbed the blood away from his knuckles, and then patted them dry so that he could put disinfectant and bandages over them. He peeled Will out of his jacket, and then washed away all of the blood, putting disinfectant everywhere that it was needed. When he got to Will's shoulders, he winced sympathetically, but then stitched the wound closed with brusk efficiency.

When Will was all cleaned and patched up, he changed into an extra pair of Hannibal's pajamas, and was then tucked into Hannibal's bed. Hannibal leaned over to kiss his forehead. "I will go take care of my present. You should rest, beloved. You've had a long day. I'm very proud of you."

Will snuggled- manly snuggles- under the thick blankets, breathing in Hannibal's scent. He felt safe and content, despite all the parts of him that hurt. He'd defeated the intruder, and made his way back to Hannibal. And he couldn't find it within himself to feel guilty about Tier's death, because it had been a fair fight, and Tier had been the one to come to him. Maybe he'd feel bad about it in the morning, but for right now, Will just felt satisfied.

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